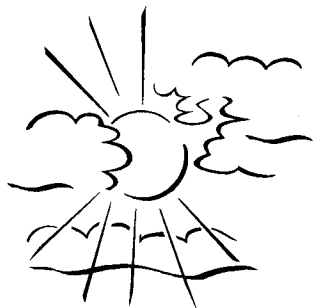


Department of Human Services

Articles in Today's Clips Wednesday, July 12, 2006

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

Prepared by the
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<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Holland Case	2
Migrants	3-4
Domestic Violence	5-8
Juvenile Justice	9-11
Rose Kelley	12-13
Child Support	14
News Releases	15-18
DHS Miscellaneous	19-21

Important story at this spot

Lansing State Journal

Local news briefs

July 12, 2006

Witness no-show at Holland hearing

A witness called to court by Lisa Holland's attorneys did not show up for a hearing Tuesday morning and was ordered to appear July 20 or face possible arrest.

Crystal Mountain, a former Ingham County Jail inmate, testified earlier this year at a preliminary hearing that Lisa Holland told her she killed her adopted son Ricky by striking him in the head with a hammer.

Mountain said the two developed a friendship soon after Lisa's arrest in late January on obstruction of justice charges related to the 7-year-old's death.

Jury selection in the trial for Tim and Lisa Holland is scheduled to begin Sept. 11. The Williamston couple are charged with murder and child abuse.

Attorney Andrew Abood said that on Monday he served Mountain with a notice to appear and even provided her with a check for mileage.

Also Tuesday, Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield said 300 potential jurors would be questioned Sept. 11. Another 300 are expected to be called Sept. 18.

The Detroit News
July 12, 2006

Letters

Stop illegal immigrants

Poll after poll after poll shows the same results: Seventy-five to 85 percent of the American public wants illegal immigration stopped. The "guest workers" program is just another ruse to continue the flood of illegals ("Fear in the fields," July 11).

The surprising thing about all of this is that President Bush and Sen. Ted Kennedy are on the same side on this issue. Even The Detroit News' story refuses to ask the public for their thoughts on this hot issue.

Guy Neroni
Clinton Township

Allow more migrant workers

I see fruit and ferns rotting on the vine and trees in Florida because there are no workers to pick them. If a legal, larger guest worker program were in place, it is possible that the illegals would be fewer.

And the numbers working seasonally would be greater. Plus they would be paying taxes. The work that they do would be out in the open and beneficial to our economy.

Beatrice Scalise
Plymouth Township

Trims hurt farm owners

It's very easy for Michiganians to want to trim the guest worker program. But in this case, the question should be asked of farm owners. They are the ones who can give a real answer since they're the ones who will suffer from the trim.

Gustavo Trejo
Detroit

Try enforcing the law

What's wrong with simple enforcement? Why is it such a bother for government entities to do the jobs they're mandated by law to do?

P. Aaron Jones
Huntington Woods

Deport illegal workers

The last thing we need is more illegal aliens sucking up resources and services paid for by legal (real) immigrants and citizens.

My ancestors and my wife were legal immigrants, not criminals. All these criminals are doing is driving down wages for citizens and real immigrants. They should be deported.

Jim Higgins
Holland

What about hotel workers?

I have yet to see stories written about the so-called guest workers who populate Mackinaw City, Mackinac Island and Saint Ignace during the summer months. Every hotel and motel has them and apparently would not function without them. How about a job and wage profile on them? How well are they screened by the state and feds?

Robert Lamm

Novi

Don't forget ancestors

How quickly we forget how our ancestors became U.S. residents and whether they would have qualified under today's ever tightening immigration policies.

Isidoros Kyrlangitses

Toronto, Canada

The Detroit News

July 12, 2006

Dear Abby

Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I was in an abusive relationship for about a year before I was finally arrested last summer for domestic violence. Since then I have enrolled in anger management class and have seen a psychologist. I have learned a lot since then and feel overwhelming remorse for what I have done.

I want to apologize to her, but there is a restraining order in effect. I feel so guilty. Any suggestions? -- DISTRAUGHT IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR DISTRAUGHT: In your case, guilt is good. It means you have a conscience. Do not, under any circumstances, try to contact your former girlfriend until you have successfully completed the anger management course and the therapy. Because there is a restraining order in place, any move you make in her direction will be construed as hostile and could land you in jail.

Csapo jailed after violating order

Traverse City Record - Eagle

BY IAN C. STOREY - July 12, 2006

istorey@record-eagle.com

TRAVERSE CITY — City commissioner Ricky Csapo was jailed Wednesday after a district judge ruled the mayor pro-tem violated a non-contact order with his wife, whom he is charged with assaulting.

Csapo, 52, was led to the Grand Traverse County Jail in handcuffs after 86th District Court Judge Thomas Phillips ruled Csapo violated a no-contact order with his wife, Cynthia Csapo, as he awaited a pre-trial hearing with assistant state attorney general Erin House.

"This was beyond incidental contact," ruled Phillips, who revoked Ricky Csapo's bond and sent him to jail until Friday morning.

Csapo was charged with misdemeanor domestic violence after he allegedly assaulted Cynthia Csapo during an argument June 23 on West Front Street in downtown Traverse City.

Witnesses told police Csapo and his wife argued along West Front Street and Csapo allegedly forced the back of her head into a large plate glass window.

House requested the hearing Wednesday after several court employees alerted her to the contact between the Csapos, which violated an order issued by Phillips last week.

"It appears clear to me that it was a blatant violation, chit-chatting with his wife in the hallway with his wife as if the order didn't apply to him," House told Phillips during the hearing.

House called several court employees, including herself, to testify during the hour-long hearing before Phillips.

One witnesses, Lt. Bryan Marrow of the Grand Traverse County sheriff's office, said he was at the courthouse to post legal notices in circuit court when he saw the couple talking.

"It was obvious they were speaking," he said.

Csapo is a retired Grand Traverse sheriff's deputy who was elected to the city commission in 2001. He pleaded not guilty to the charge, which he told the Record-Eagle was a

"misunderstanding of the facts."

Defense attorney Clarence Gomery argued during the hearing that the contact was "incidental" and said the couple hasn't had any other contact.

"It was a couple of words back and forth," he said.

Man receives life behind bars for killing girlfriend

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

By John S. Hausman - **MUSKEGON CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER**

He destroyed a family, and now he pays the price.

Bruce Ray Uhl said nothing and showed no emotion Tuesday as he got the mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole for killing his longtime live-in girlfriend, Brenda Michelle Orton. Uhl unexpectedly pleaded no contest last month to first-degree murder, heading off a trial.

Though Uhl was silent, the victim's mother and brother, both of whom have disabilities, spoke their piece before 14th Circuit Judge William C. Marietti.

"It's been a bad eight months for me," said Orton's mother, Brenda Flores of Rothbury, speaking laboriously from a wheelchair, where she was on oxygen. "He just messed up my whole family. That was my baby ... and we will all miss her."

Orton's brother, Andrew Ecklund, who is developmentally disabled, spoke with the aid of an attendant who prompted him with questions. "She was my sunshine," Ecklund said. "We went bowling. ... We went to Chuck E. Cheese's." He said his mother is now "sad and cloudy" as a result of the murder, and he, too, is sad.

According to police reports, a drunken Uhl shot the 36-year-old Orton three times at about 9 p.m. Nov. 11 in the home at 1137 E. Forest they shared with their three children. He fired one shot to the chest and two to the head, stopping to recock his antique, single-action revolver before each shot.

Uhl, 42, shot her after an argument, the last of many for a couple who never married, but lived together for years. Acquaintances told police Uhl was a heavy, daily drinker who often was jealous of Orton.

All three of the couple's children were in the house when it happened. Their 9-year-old daughter, Ashley, told detectives she heard three shots after hearing her parents shouting and seeing her father holding his gun. She ran and got her 14-year-old brother, Ricco, from his bedroom. They both found their mortally wounded mother lying on steps leading from the kitchen to the garage, and Ricco called 9-1-1. A third son, 15-year-old Bruce, who is mentally and physically disabled, and unable to speak, was lying in his bed nearby.

Police found Orton unconscious and nearly lifeless. She was pronounced dead shortly afterward in the emergency room of Mercy General Hospital Sherman Campus.

Police said Uhl was standing outside when officers arrived. His .22-caliber revolver was confiscated. Uhl confessed to police almost immediately, although he claimed not to remember actually firing the shots. A portable breath test shortly after his arrest showed a blood-alcohol level of 0.16 percent, twice the legal level for driving in Michigan.

"He doesn't deserve life in prison, to be quite honest, but that's the maximum Michigan allows," said Senior Assistant Muskegon County Prosecutor Dale J. Hilson. Michigan has no death penalty.

Public defender Annette Smedley said nothing, noting that her client wished to remain silent. Outside court afterward she repeated what she said after Uhl's no-contest plea, that he accepted the top-count conviction for "personal reasons."

Teen who made hit list in 2005 back in trouble

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPRINGFIELD TWP. — A teenager who pleaded guilty to threatening terrorism for making a list of Holly High School teachers and students he wanted to kill has been accused of punching his mother and her boyfriend.

Mark O'Berry, 15, of Oakland County's Springfield Township, was arrested in March 2005 after students at Holly High School told authorities he made a written list of a dozen people he said he wanted to kill.

O'Berry pleaded guilty to the terrorism count.

In January, Circuit Judge Dan-

iel Patrick O'Brien decided to end O'Berry's probation, meaning his criminal record is to be expunged and his file destroyed 28 days after his 17th birthday.

On Saturday, the teen attacked his mother and her boyfriend after an argument about a camping trip, county Prosecutor David Gorcyca said.

Gorcyca said prosecutors expected to present a juvenile petition charging O'Berry with domestic violence and assault and battery.

O'Berry was taken into juvenile custody and faced a hearing July 18, The Detroit News reported.

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Critics of Mich. life-without-parole youth sentences take case to U.N.

Panel, whose rulings are nonbinding, will review whether law violates human rights treaty.

David Eggert / Associated Press

LANSING -- A United Nations panel is expected to start reviewing whether life-without-parole sentences for juveniles in Michigan and 41 other states violate an international treaty on human rights.

Critics of Michigan's law will brief the U.N. Human Rights Committee later this week.

Other issues the panel will consider range from U.S. treatment of detainees in the war on terror to domestic concerns involving the death penalty and abortion.

Just over 300 Michigan inmates convicted of crimes committed before age 18 are serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole.

A study by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International shows Michigan has the second-highest rate of imposing life sentences without parole on juveniles.

Kary Moss, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan, said young offenders deserve a second chance, arguing they have less capacity than adults to understand the consequences of their actions.

Democratic-sponsored bills in the state Legislature would bar juveniles from being sentenced to life without parole and give those already in prison a chance for parole, but they are opposed by Republicans who control the House and Senate.

"We certainly hope Michigan lawmakers will take note when their own state is being brought up for international attention," said Moss, who will join representatives from other advocacy groups in Geneva to present findings on alleged U.S. human rights abuses.

But Rep. William Van Regenmorter, a Republican from Ottawa County's Georgetown Township who chairs the House Judiciary Committee, said the state's juvenile sentencing law is appropriate, arguing that crimes committed by youth are becoming more violent.

"It's appropriate for persons to have the time match the crime," Van Regenmorter said. "We're talking very serious offenses here."

The U.N. Human Rights Committee reviews the practices of the 149 countries who have ratified the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The United States, like the other 148 countries, must submit periodic reports with the committee detailing its compliance. Its 120-page report was filed almost seven years late.

Van Regenmorter said prisoners serving life already can petition the governor to commute or pardon their sentences. But Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm has been reluctant to use that power, except for medical reasons.

Moss acknowledged that criticism by the U.N. panel brings no penalties beyond international scrutiny. The committee is expected to issue conclusions when it wraps up its session July 28.

On the Net: ACLU of Michigan: www.aclumich.org. U.N. Human Rights Commission: www.ohchr.org/english.

Judge delays trial for teen

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

THE SAGINAW NEWS

Because a teen's attorney was out of town, a judge has delayed the trial of a 13-year-old facing adult charges that he assaulted two Saginaw police officers.

The trial for DeVaughntae Q.D. Woods was supposed to start today before Saginaw County Circuit Judge William A. Crane.

Woods, who was an eighth-grader at Ricker Middle School in Buena Vista Township, faces charges of assault with intent to murder Officers Diane Ifill and/or Oscar Lopez, felonious assault against Ifill and/or Lopez, carrying a concealed weapon and two counts of possessing a firearm while committing a felony April 4.

Authorities say Woods, armed with a gun, struggled with Ifill when Lopez arrived to assist her. Woods is in the County Detention Center on a \$450,000 bond.

Medical examiner labels Rose's death a homicide

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

By Ron Fongerrfonger@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6317

FLINT - Five-year-old Rose Kelley was a victim of homicide, dying from liver disease that was compounded by neglect, the Oakland County medical examiner said Tuesday.

Dr. Ljubisa J. Dragovic made the finding but would not discuss what may have caused the liver failure or how her care may have contributed to her death.

Dragovic made the determination the same day Rose's parents appeared before Genesee Probate Judge Robert E. Weiss for a hearing to terminate their parental rights to their other children.

No decision was made.

Assistant Genesee County Prosecutor Marcie M. Mabry and attorneys representing Rose's mother and father and the father of Rose's 10-year-old half sister agreed to return to court July 25.

Neither the final autopsy report on Rose nor evaluations of Rose's three siblings, who are in foster care, are completed.

Weiss earlier ordered the evaluations to determine the effects, if any, of visitation with the children's parents.

Rose's mother, Michelle L. Bowen, 31, appeared in court with attorney Kraig Sippell. Rose's father and Bowen's fiance, Jeffery C. Kelley, 30, was represented by attorney John A. Tosto. Jeffrey Mitchell, the father of Rose's 10-year-old half sister, did not appear in court but was represented by attorney Marc T. Dedenbach.

The three attorneys asked Weiss to allow supervised visitations to resume, but Weiss denied the request and asked officials to specifically address the psychological effects of the visits on the children, who also include a boy, 6, and a girl, 2.

Rose died June 3 in the family's flea- and lice-infested N. Franklin Avenue home after an untreated illness. Sick for five days, she was never taken to a doctor.

Police have said Bowen told them she feared her children would be taken from her if a doctor saw Rose's condition, which included severe head lice and possible malnourishment. Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton would not comment on the medical examiner's findings but said his office would review Dragovic's full report before deciding on criminal charges.

Tosto said he had not received the medical examiner's report.

"They are going to have to show some kind of connection" between the death and alleged neglect, Tosto said.

Dragovic described the cause of death as acute hepatic necrosis, which he called uncommon in children. He described it as "a very rapid rotting of the liver."

"The contributory cause is child neglect, and the manner of death is homicide," he said. Dr. Keith Lindor, a professor of medicine and consultant in gastroenterology and hepatology at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine Medical School, said it's uncommon for children to die from liver failure.

The condition could be caused by a number of factors ranging from viral hepatitis to misuse of medication.

The medical examiner's description is generic enough to leave many possibilities open, Lindor said.

Caseworkers for the state Department of Human Services and Flint police have said Rose had been dead for about five hours when they saw her.

Her case has attracted statewide attention because of previous contact between the family and DHS. The Office of Children's Ombudsman is investigating how DHS handled its responsibility for protecting the four children living in the home.

Journal staff writer Paul Janczewski contributed to this report.

Attorney: Men cannot decline fatherhood

Monday, July 10, 2006
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A state attorney says a lawsuit filed by a men's rights group on behalf of a man who is declining fatherhood is "frivolous" and the man has an obligation to financially support his daughter. Assistant Attorney General Joel D. McGormley asked U.S. District Judge David M. Lawson to dismiss the lawsuit during a hearing last week in Bay City.

Lawson said he would take the case under advisement and issue a ruling later. He did not say when he would rule.

The National Center for Men filed the lawsuit in March on behalf of Matt Dubay, a 25-year-old computer programmer, who was ordered to pay \$500 in monthly child support for his ex-girlfriend's daughter. Dubay has said the ex-girlfriend, Lauren Wells, knew he didn't want to have a child and she assured him repeatedly she could not get pregnant because of a medical condition.

But McGormley argued that Dubay cannot avoid child support just because he didn't want to become a father.

Dubay has said that if a pregnant woman can choose among abortion, adoption or raising a child, a man involved in an unintended pregnancy should have the choice of declining the financial end of fatherhood.

The lawsuit - nicknamed "Roe v. Wade for Men" - argues that the lack of male reproductive rights violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause.

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JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

DHS Family to Family sites chosen to serve as national models *Wayne & Macomb counties hailed for efforts in protecting children and families*

July 12, 2006

LANSING – Department of Human Services (DHS) officials today announced that Wayne and Macomb counties have been selected as two of only fifteen sites nationwide to be designated as Family to Family “anchor” sites by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The 15 sites – selected from among 50 applicants nationwide – were chosen to serve as models for other states and jurisdictions as they implement the principles and tools of the Family to Family approach.

“This is great news that affirms the direction of our fundamental reforms of the child welfare system Michigan,” said DHS director Marianne Udow. “The Family to Family approach is a key element of overall reforms that are protecting children and strengthening families in Michigan.”

Family to Family is a partnership between local DHS offices, families, and communities to improve safety and well being and reduce disruption in the lives children at risk of entering the foster care system. This approach ensures that birth parents, foster parents and community representatives are involved in the decision-making process concerning the safety, placement and service needs of children and their families.

“We are excited about continuing our collaboration with Michigan,” Pat Rideout, senior consultant for Family to Family operations for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, said. “We look forward to building on the progress Wayne and Macomb counties have made in the first five years of our Family to Family effort.”

The Family to Family initiative has been successfully implemented in 38 counties across the state, with 28 more counties scheduled for implementation by the end of the calendar year.

The Family to Family model protects children by:

- ☐ Increasing family involvement and investment in developing safety and service plans for their children.
- ☐ Utilizing extended family, kin and community-based resources to support the family and monitor the safety of the children.
- ☐ Providing better information to DHS staff to ensure that all safety issues are addressed and back-up plans are available.
- ☐ Keeping the children in the community, their school and with siblings who know what is “normal” for the child and will be alert to any changes that may signal problems.
- ☐ Greater use of individualized services to meet the unique needs of a particular family.

-MORE-

In addition to recognizing the progress Wayne and Macomb counties have made in protecting children and strengthening families, the Annie E. Casey Foundation was impressed with Michigan's overall child welfare reform plan. They were particularly impressed with DHS's comprehensive efforts to reduce racial disparities in the child welfare system and the state's plan to expand prevention and early intervention services using federal foster care funds.

Michigan's fundamental reforms to date have resulted in fewer children in the foster care system, more children placed with relatives, and fewer children re-entering the system.

"The field of child welfare has changed dramatically in the past 10 years and continues to change daily," Udow said. "DHS's top priority of supporting children remains as strong as ever as we look for ways to become more effective in improving outcomes for the families we serve."

For more information about the Department of Human Services and Family to Family, visit www.michigan.gov/dhs

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JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Stepheni Schlinker or Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394

Mecosta-Osceola County DHS Announces New Approach to Foster Care ***"Family to Family" Keeps Foster Care Kids in their Schools and Communities***

July 12, 2006

BIG RAPIDS – For many years, foster children in Michigan were often placed outside of their own communities and moved multiple times while in care. There is substantial research indicating that children in foster care who have frequent contact with their birth parents, remain in their schools, and continue their existing friendship and family networks, have a higher rate of successful reunification with their birth parents.

"Children are our most precious resource," Governor Jennifer M. Granholm said. "It is critical that we work together to do everything we can not only to ensure the safety of our children, but also to provide them with a stable environment in which they are surrounded by adults who care about them and will help them learn and grow."

That is why the Michigan Department of Human Services is working to implement a child welfare reform initiative called Family to Family in every county in the state. The goal of Family to Family is to place children who must be removed from their families with one permanent and stable family in the child's own community until reunification with birth families can occur or until the child is released for adoption.

The Family to Family initiative has already been successfully implemented in several counties across the state, including Mecosta and Osceola Counties. Family to Family is a partnership between the local Department of Human Services and the community to reduce disruption in the lives of at-risk children. This approach ensures that birth parents, foster parents and community representatives are involved in the decision-making process concerning the placement and service needs of at-risk children.

In an effort to help Mecosta and Osceola County residents better understand the Family to Family initiative, the Mecosta-Osceola County Department of Human Services is hosting a community forum on July 12, 2006 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Ferris State University, Dome Room – Rankin Student Center, 805 Campus Drive, in Big Rapids.

This event will feature foster parents and former foster children speaking about their experience with the child welfare system as well as parents who have been or are currently involved in the state's child welfare system. Additionally, several Mecosta and Osceola County community human service agencies will be present with information about the services they provide.

-MORE-

"When children are placed in foster care they often do not understand what has happened and why they cannot live with their parents," Marianne Udow, Michigan Department of Human Services director, said. "When we ask children where they want to be, no matter how dysfunctional their family is, the children overwhelmingly say they want to live with their family. With the Family to Family approach we are able to keep kids in their own neighborhoods and communities by placing them with extended family or kin. The less disruption children encounter, the easier it will be for them to succeed in school and in life."

The Family to Family model protects children by:

- ☐ Increasing family involvement and investment in developing safety and service plans for their children.
- ☐ Utilizing extended family, kin and community-based resources to support the family and monitor the safety of the children.
- ☐ Providing better information to DHS staff to ensure that all safety issues are addressed and back-up plans are available.
- ☐ Keeping the children in the community, their school and with siblings who know what is "normal" for the child and will be alert to any changes that may signal problems.
- ☐ Greater use of individualized services to meet the unique needs of a particular family.

For more information about the Family to Family initiative, visit the Michigan Department of Human Services Web site at www.michigan.gov/dhs.

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No short-term fix to long-term care

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

By Sharon Emery

Michigan's nursing home industry is struggling with an inconvenient truth: While you'd expect the million or so low-income children and their parents on Medicaid to be sucking up the \$7.5 billion Michigan budgets for the program, it turns out those people tend to be relatively healthy.

The real drain on resources is the state's elderly and disabled, who consume two-thirds of the money even though they represent just 28 percent of Medicaid patients.

Anyone who's faced the \$60,000-plus annual cost of nursing home care can attest to how quickly an unprepared patient's assets are consumed and the state-federal insurance program for the poor kicks in.

So with 70 percent of nursing home customers receiving care on the government's dime, nursing homes are a no-brainer target for Medicaid budget-trimming. That's the truth.

But like any offspring claiming its birthright, the industry -- which government helped create with the establishment of Medicaid and Medicare in the 1960s -- is resisting. The battle so far has been low-key, but with nonstop prodding for change by lawmakers and state officials, the industry appears ready to take the fight into the street.

The Health Care Association of Michigan, representing for-profit nursing homes, called a media roundtable last week to make its case: Family satisfaction with nursing homes is at 93 percent despite low Medicaid reimbursement rates, which make paying a competent staff to care for the growing elderly population difficult.

Association President Reginald Carter noted with some irritation that state money for nursing homes is always in short supply, while the political will to spend elsewhere prevails.

"The routine discussion is that there is no money -- but then there is," for certain things, he said.

The industry is also battling a key proposal of Gov. Jennifer Granholm's Medicaid Long-term Care Task Force, single-point-of-entry agencies. Legislation with 40 bipartisan cosponsors would create local programs to educate patients about all long-term care options, including less-expensive home care. The industry says it agreed only to pilot programs, not a statewide rollout of the agencies.

And while the governor is offering an extra \$5 per day for Medicaid patients in as many as 75 nursing homes willing to create more private rooms, only 37 have applied. Carter called the response "disappointing," but blamed the uncertainty of government funding for the reticence.

Curiously, not much is happening with other ideas, including a plan to recover the cost of nursing home care from the estates of relatively well-off patients after they die. The Granholm administration keeps including it in budget recommendations, but the Legislature isn't interested. Legislative leaders instead have been working on a plan to cut mainly women and children off welfare after four years.

And beyond a bill introduction, there's been little noise about creating tax incentives for people to buy long-term care insurance so they don't end up on the public dole. Lawmakers are instead fixated on business tax reform.

A national study cited by the governor's task force found that just 21 percent of long-term care is funded by family resources and only 10 percent by private insurance. So clearly we've decided that caring for the elderly and disabled is best left to taxpayers. At a time when personal responsibility has been injected into just about every government program, this seems glaringly inconsistent.

Jon Reardon, president of the Hoyt Nursing & Rehab Centre in Saginaw, pegged the per-diem shortfall in the state's Medicaid rate at his facility at about \$14 per patient, more than \$300,000 annually. And he lamented the \$10 average hourly pay of the certified nursing assistants who provide most of the care.

"This is not a highly valued health care position," he concluded.

Indeed. And until families themselves begin planning ahead for the costs, it may never be.

Man pleads no contest in abduction of daughter 30 years ago

By BRIAN CHARLTON

Associated Press Writer – July 12, 2006

PONTIAC, Mich. (AP) -- A man who authorities say abducted his 2-year-old daughter three decades ago and led her to believe that her mother was killed in a traffic crash pleaded no contest Wednesday to a parental kidnapping charge.

Eric Douglas Nielsen, 54, offered the plea in Oakland County Circuit Court and faces a maximum sentence of a year in jail when he is sentenced July 26. A no contest plea in Michigan is not an admission of guilt but is treated as such for sentencing purposes.

Richard Morgan, Nielsen's lawyer, said the plea was made in the best interest of the family and was designed to help put an end to the 30-year-old ordeal.

"He did this out of love. There was nothing malicious in the way it was done. It was purely because he loves his daughter," Morgan said.

Barb Morrison, assistant Oakland County prosecutor, said she was pleased the case is coming to an end.

"Right now, we're trying not to do more damage to the family," she said. "Yes, he needed to be punished, and we've enforced the law."

Nielsen, who had been living under an alias, was extradited from Arizona, where he was imprisoned on an unrelated assault charge.

Sheriff's deputies say Nielsen picked up Genevieve - who is now 32 - at his estranged wife's Oakland County home May 8, 1976. It was to be only an overnight visit, but they never returned. Laura Gooder, Genevieve's mother, learned recently that her daughter was alive and living in the Phoenix area. Gooder now lives in Frederic, north of Grayling.